



SPORT

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Van der Meyde calls it quits

Former Dutch international Andy van der Meyde has retired from playing due to a succession of injuries, the winger said in an interview with Dutch weekly magazine NU-sport on Friday.

"I quit, I don't want to play anymore," he said.

Van der Meyde, 31, started his career at Ajax Amsterdam and had spells at Twente Enschede, Ajax again and Inter Milan before joining Everton in 2005. He joined PSV Eindhoven but did not play a first-team game.

Van der Meyde won 17 caps for the Netherlands.

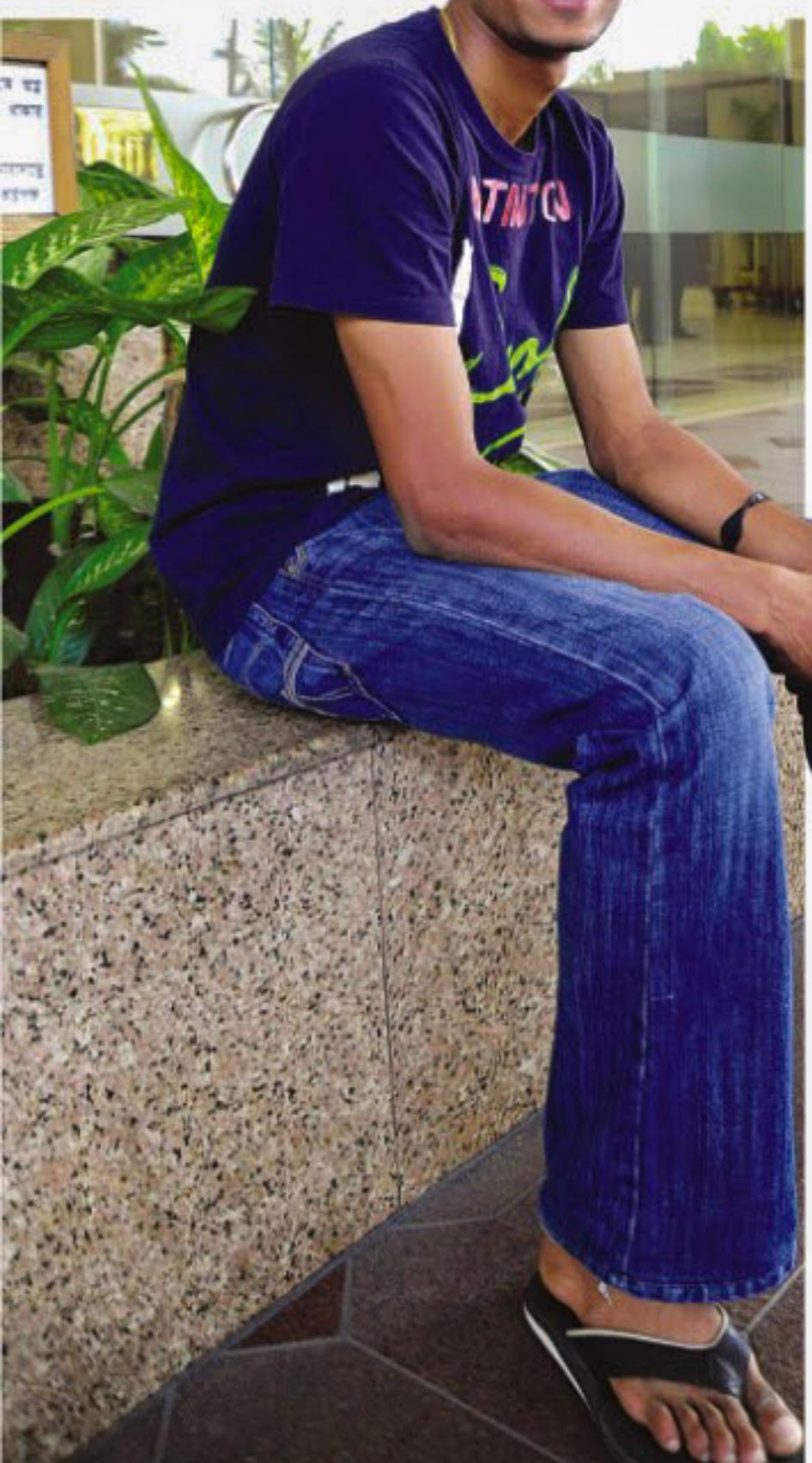
- REUTERS



BASKING IN RELIEF: (L) Having led his side to victory through a nerve-wrecking journey the previous night, Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan rode off, relieved, in his car for a well-earned two-day vacation. (L, below) Match-winner Shafiqul Islam is a picture of naive ecstasy as he waits outside the Sheraton Hotel to be picked for a journey home.

PHOTOS:
ANISUR RAHMAN

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'We can get better'

BISHWAJIT ROY

When the Bangladesh cricketers return to their business tomorrow after two days' break, the team think-tank should look to plug the holes even though they would be on a high following their 27-run victory over Ireland on Friday in their second Group B match.

The much-desired success against the Irish definitely gave the Tigers a great relief as well as the cricket mad people of the country, but they can in no way be satisfied with their overall performance in the match. It might not be unwise to say that the additional burden or pressure is over for Shakib Al Hasan's men after the first two games in the showcase event. There had been tremendous hype surrounding the opening match against

India while the expectation was enormous for the second match against Ireland which had ultimately turned into a do-or-die battle for the Tigers because the result would influence the team's chances of securing a quarterfinals berth.

So, it is believed that normalcy will return to the Tigers' tent and that they closely examine their performance in the first two games, on their way to make a fresh start against West Indies in the third group encounter at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on March 4. And it is also expected that the team think-tank will not get carried away with the emotions of the fans who celebrated the victory of their beloved team against the ICC Associate Member country at their best possible way.

Though it was not easy sailing for the home team, one can easily find a lot of positives in the win. The manner in which the team squeezed the victory away from the Ireland team in front of an electrifying

crowd after a poor batting performance was impressive to say the least. As captain Shakib was possibly at his best in the way he handled his bowlers in defence of a fragile total of 205. The youngest captain in the tournament kept his nerve superbly, and was as aggressive as he could be to ensure the victory.

Also encouraging was the way he used his bowlers in short spells to make sure the opposition batsmen could not settle. Almost all his moves came off in the second session of the match, which in no small part owes to the brilliant fielding display. And pacer Shafiqul Islam deserves accolades for his impressive comeback in the match after a dismal performance against India in the opening match.

But yesterday's match threw up some cause for concern as well. One can't expect the team to win with a score of just 205 when they take on more fancied opponents. And certainly, everybody will expect

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Tigers relax after scare

MOHAMMAD ISAM

There will be a review of Bangladesh's performance against Ireland tomorrow when they get together after a two-day break and while it is clear there will be some pats on the back, tough questions are in store for few of the batsmen.

The Tigers defeated the Associate Member nation by 27 runs in front of a highly-charged crowd at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Friday to pick up their first win of this World Cup, and the euphoria still hasn't left many who celebrated the victory. Some of the Tigers returned home yesterday and while Imrul Kayes slept for most of the day, others like Shafiqul Islam and Rokibul Hasan spent some time in the gym before heading to their families for the day.

The focus of the team, however, is firmly on the tricky road ahead including the next fixture against the West Indies on March 4 as the team management are set to discuss what went on during Friday afternoon.

Coach Jamie Siddons, though not admittedly upset by the batting display, pointed out a few areas during Bangladesh's win that concerned him.

"I'm not disappointed. I think 200 was a good enough score to win and we did that. The game's done and we have learned the lessons. We will work on the problems and there will be a review in two days," informed Siddons.

"I thought Ash's shot was okay but Mushfiqur's wasn't really great. Raj and Shakib have a few things to work on and they will be doing it in the next few days," he said, also praising Naeem's plucky all-round display, the late-order batsman keeping the Tigers' innings together in the end with his 38-ball 29 as well as picking up 1-36 from nine overs with the ball.

"We found out we have other ways to get teams out. Naeem and Ash did fantastic jobs with Ash doing the work of a part-time bowler. I thought Naeem played his part with the ball, bowled well in partnerships. And he didn't throw his wicket away too when we needed him to stay," said Siddons.

Tamim's hand injury after he took the diving catch to remove Niall O'Brien is another worry for Siddons, who mentioned how the team must sometimes realise just how big the tournament is for the people of this country. "After the match, it was unbelievable.

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TODAY'S MATCH

Match	Time	Venue
India v England	3:00pm	Bangalore

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Reader's analysis of the day!

India - England

Jhumur Khastagir

The match was shifted from the Eden Gardens in Kolkata to Bangalore which may work in England's favour. The track at the Eden Gardens usually assists the slower bowlers apart from the fact that the crowd of nearly 80,000 can really get behind the home team. At Bangalore, the track will assist the quicker men more. India had surprised everyone by going in with a three pace bowlers' attack in the previous game against Bangladesh, but rest assured that will not be the case in this game. One of the three faster men, S Sreesanth in all probability, will make way for Piyush Chawla or R Ashwin. As compared to that, the batting line-up despite the Virender Sehwag injury-scare should remain the same, while Kevin Pietersen may open the innings in the game. Whoever the opponent is, India is always favorite in their home ground.

Send your analysis (in 100 words) on West Indies - Netherland match to analysis11@ovi.com. The best analysis will be published tomorrow.